

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1516

Introduced by Assembly Member Gonzalez

January 15, 2014

An act relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1516, as introduced, Gonzalez. Public social services: diapers.

Existing law establishes various public social services programs to provide for protection, care, and assistance to the people of the state in need of those services, by providing appropriate aid and services to the needy and distressed, including CalWORKs and CalFresh. Existing federal law, the Food Stamp Act, provides for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known in California as CalFresh. The act allocates supplemental nutrition assistance benefits to the state to be distributed to eligible individuals by each county. In addition, the federal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), provides federal grants to the states for food, nutrition education, nutrition counseling, and access to health services for low-income women, infants, and children. The California Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) implements those grants under the administration of the State Department of Public Health.

This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would empower beneficiaries of public assistance programs with young children in diapers to return to the workforce by removing unnecessary obstacles to obtaining diapers to the extent permitted by federal law.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as The
2 Healthy Baby Bottom Act of 2014 or HBBA.
3 SEC. 2. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the
4 following:
5 (a) Existing federal law classifies diapers with cigarettes,
6 alcohol, and pet food as disallowed purchases under CalFresh and
7 the California Special Supplemental Food Program for Women,
8 Infants, and Children.
9 (b) However, low-income parents cannot take advantage of free
10 or subsidized child care if they cannot afford to leave disposable
11 diapers at child care centers, a requirement for most child care
12 centers.
13 (c) Without access to child care, these parents are less able to
14 attend work or school on a consistent basis, leading to increased
15 economic instability and a continuation of the cycle of poverty.
16 (d) In addition, the severe health and social consequences for
17 babies and families who do not have access to diapers cannot be
18 underestimated or overlooked.
19 (e) Lack of sufficient diapers can lead to multiple problems for
20 families in need, including unhappy babies, unhealthy communities,
21 undereducated toddlers, and underemployed adults.
22 (f) Access to diapers can make the difference for a family to
23 become financially self-sufficient.
24 (g) Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to enact
25 legislation that would empower beneficiaries of public assistance
26 programs with young children in diapers to return to the workforce
27 by removing unnecessary obstacles to obtaining diapers to the
28 extent permitted by federal law, thereby ensuring the health and
29 welfare of diaper-wearing children and their families.